

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3-5 and 10 are pending.

The Final Rejection rejects claims 1, 3-5 and 10 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 6,203,136 to Takahashi et al. (hereinafter "Takahashi") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,068,364 to Kusumi et al. (hereinafter "Kusumi"). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Applicant respectfully submits that neither Takahashi nor Kusumi, either alone, or in a permissible combination, discloses or suggests a ring-like lip that includes a distal end and a groove that urges the distal end to be deformed in an outer side of the ring-like lip, the groove extending vertically and perpendicularly to the bottom surface, as recited in independent claims 1, and as similarly recited in independent claim 10. Further neither Takahashi nor Kusumi teaches or suggests a distal end falling downward to an inside of the groove when a print head is pressed onto the nozzle surface, as recited in independent claim 1.

The Final Rejection alleges that the draping 35 of Takahashi corresponds to the claimed ring-like lip. Additionally, the Final Rejection, on page 4, includes an annotated Fig. 12(b) of Takahashi. In particular, with reference to the annotated Fig. 12(b) on page 4, the Final Rejection alleges that the draping 35 of Takahashi includes a distal end and a groove that correspond the claimed distal end and groove, respectively, as recited in independent claims 1 and 10. Furthermore, the Final Rejection, citing col. 6, lines 44-54 of Takahashi, alleges that the alleged distal end of the draping 35 falls downward to an inside of the alleged groove when a cap is pressed. Applicant respectfully disagrees with these assertions.

Applicant respectfully submits that Takahashi fails to disclose or suggest that the draping 35 of Takahashi urges the alleged distal end of the draping 35 to be deformed. Additionally, Takahashi also fails to disclose or suggest that the alleged distal end of the draping 35 falls downward to an inside of the alleged groove when a cap is pressed. In

contrast, Takahashi merely describes that when cap 34 of Takahashi is tilted with respect to a nozzle plate P, one corner of the cap 34 first comes into contact with the nozzle plate P, and then the pressure is applied to the other cap corners such that the other corners of cap 34 contacts the nozzle plate P (see Takahashi, col. 6, lines 44-54 and Figs. 4 and 6(a)). That is, the portions of the cap 34 that contact the nozzle plate P, increases as pressure is applied to the cap 34 until a recording head is completely covered. Therefore, the draping 35 of Takahashi cannot reasonably be considered to correspond to the claimed ring-like lip that includes a distal end and a groove that urges the distal end to be deformed in an outer side of the ring-like lip, as recited in independent claims 1 and 10, and a distal end that falls downward to an inside of the groove when a print head cap is pressed onto the nozzle surface, as recited in independent claim 1.

Further, Applicant respectfully submits that Kusumi does not remedy the above deficiencies of Takahashi. The Final Rejection acknowledges Takahashi fails to disclose a groove that extends vertically and perpendicular to the bottom surface. However, the Final Rejection alleges Kusumi remedies the deficiencies of Takahashi. Applicant respectfully disagrees with this assertion.

Applicant submits that because the cap 32 of Kusumi includes a 90° cut in a lip region 46, the lips of the cap 32 are not deformable or flexible (see Kusumi, Figs. 2-4). Thus, modifying Takahashi to include the cap 32 of Kusumi would render the system described by Takahashi inoperable.

Additionally, Applicant respectfully submits that the Final Rejection's assertion that all of the features of independent claim 1 are well known in the art and that the modification to include all of these features would have been obvious in view of *KSR* is flawed. In particular, Applicant respectfully submits that neither Takahashi nor Kasumi teaches or suggests a ring-like lip that includes a distal end and a groove that urges the distal end to be

deformed in an outer side of the ring-like lip, as recited in independent claims 1 and 10.

Further, neither Takahashi nor Kasumi discloses or suggests a distal end falling downward to an inside of the groove when a print head is pressed onto the nozzle surface, as recited in independent claim 1. Thus, Applicant submits that the Final Rejection's reasoning with respect to *KSR* is flawed.

Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that independent claims 1 and 10 are patentable over the combination of Takahashi and Kusumi. Further, claims 3-5 are patentable over the combination of Takahashi and Kusumi, at least in view of the patentability of independent claim 1, from which these claims depend, as well as for the additional features these claims recite.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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